



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

News Release

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SEVEN ARRESTED IN ICE OPERATION TARGETING UNAUTHORIZED WORKERS AT CUSTOMS WAREHOUSE

SAN FRANCISCO – U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents yesterday arrested seven Mexican nationals who were working illegally at a Pacific American Service (PACAM) warehouse and distribution center for goods brought into the United States through the Port of Oakland.

In yesterday morning's operation, ICE agents apprehended the men as they reported for work at PACAM's Hayward warehouse. The workers were identified after agents audited the hiring records of more than 60 PACAM workers and found that approximately 25 percent of the employees may not have been authorized to work in the United States.

Yesterday's operation is part of ICE's worksite enforcement efforts focusing on businesses with ties to security sensitive sites and critical infrastructure facilities -- including airports, military bases, and bio-agriculture industries. Unauthorized workers with access to such sites are vulnerable to exploitation by terrorists, smugglers, traffickers, or other criminals. PACAM'S bonded facilities are located in northern California, close to the San Francisco and Oakland ports, rail yards and international airports.

"Addressing security vulnerabilities that pose a potential threat to our nation's vital infrastructure is a crucial part of ICE's enforcement strategy," said Charles DeMore, special agent-in-charge for ICE investigations in San Francisco. "When someone uses fraud or false documents to gain access to a major cargo hub like the Port of Oakland, we have no way of knowing who they really are or what their motives might be. If that person turns out to be a criminal or a terrorist, they are in a position to strike a devastating blow against the flow of commerce and our nation's economy."

The men arrested yesterday will be voluntarily returned to Mexico or deported after facing administrative charges for violating immigration laws. At least one of the men had been previously deported and may be subject to criminal prosecution.

To aid employers, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services operates the Basic Pilot Program, a Web-based system that enables businesses to verify the employment eligibility of newly hired workers. Nationwide, there are more than 20,000 hiring sites using the Basic Pilot Program. Interested employers are urged to call the agency's toll-free number [888-464-4218] to obtain more information about the program.

ICE